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Life and Character of Rev. Jonathan Edwards.

(Concluded from p. 178.)

MR. EDWARDS from his ordination, February 15, 1727, continued laboring among the people of Northampton with great success, and to the entire satisfaction of the people, for about seventeen years, before any event happened to disturb their harmony. The church at Northampton, had before the year 1744, been composed of all persons in the town not of a scandalous behaviour, or of openly vicious lives, who from fashion, for reputation's sake, or a desire to have their children baptized, were willing to own the covenant. This organization of the church, had been introduced by Mr. Stoddard the predecessor of Mr. Edwards, and had without much attention been for many years practised upon by Mr. Edwards.

Among the members of the church thus composed, some young persons had associated together for the purpose of conversation, and reading books upon subjects of an immoral and licentious tendency. This came to the knowledge of their pastor, and he, after preaching a sermon adapted to the case, laid the subject before the church, but without mentioning the names of the delinquents. The church almost unanimously, and with great zeal, assented to the propriety of examining into the conduct of the members accused, and appointed a committee to assist Mr. Edwards in the enquiry. In pursuance of the request of the church, he appointed a meeting at his own house, to which he invited the attendance of all those who were accused as well as witnesses, without discriminating who were witnesses and who were accused. It was then discovered that the persons named were either nearly or

remotely connected with almost all the principal families in the town, and it was no sooner discovered, than those who were zealous to have an enquiry into the conduct of the members of the church, were determined that that enquiry should not touch the conduct of their own children and friends. The town was at once in a ferment, the hands of the pastor were weakened, and the dissolute conduct of the younger church members was encouraged by the countenance and approbation of their seniors, whose ill-judged tenderness, to screen them from censure, would justify their wickedness. Whatever diversity of opinion as to the proper qualifications for church membership might have prevailed, it seems scarcely credible that any church of professed Christians would deny to their pastor the right of inspecting the conduct of the members.

Mr. Edwards' eyes were now thoroughly opened to see the fundamental error in the formation of the church. A church composed of members many, perhaps the most, of whom, did not even profess or pretend to be Christians, who were not even pretended saints, but avowed sinners, would without doubt be unwilling to have their conduct examined too minutely.—Such persons should never have been members of a church of Christ, and the practice under which they had been admitted was undoubtedly as far from being justified by the word of God, as by the principles of natural reason or the dictates of common sense.

Mr. Edwards was thus led to examine into the proper qualifications for admission to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And after a long time spent in reading all the authors on the subject, examining the holy scriptures, and reflecting maturely thereon, he formed the opinion that none but real Christians ought to profess to be Christians, and that none but those who professed to be, and appeared to be Christians ought to be admitted to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

The people of the town, when they first learned the sentiments of their pastor, took great offence, and without waiting to hear him preach upon the subject, or giving him an opportunity to vindicate his own opinion, or convince them of the error of theirs, began to clamor for his dismission. He proposed to the committee of the church that he would, in his sermons, explain his sentiments as to the qualifications for communion, and give his reasons at large, but they would not consent to his preaching upon the subject. He then proposed to the church that he would, in a series of public lectures on week days, preach in defence of his sentiments, and desired their consent, but they refused to hear him. He next proposed to submit to a few of the neighboring ministers the question, whether it was not reasonable, all things considered, that he should be heard in this matter from the pulpit before his dismission, but this proposal met their decided opposition. He however did take the advice of the neighboring ministers and churches, and appointed a weekly lecture for the express pur-

pose of explaining and defending his sentiments. The society, at a meeting convened previous to the time proposed for his first lecture, appointed a committee, who in the name of the society, went to Mr. Edwards, and desired him not to preach the lectures which he had appointed. Notwithstanding their opposition, however, he began and continued his course of lectures, upon the controverted subject. Strangers attended these lectures, but his own people would not hear him.

Mr. Edwards had considered that the separation of a minister from his church and congregation was a business of a very solemn and important nature, and such as ought not to be undertaken without great deliberation. He thought the temper of the people did not give room for that calm and dispassionate reflection, which the importance of the occasion required. But finding that the more he sought to be heard in his defence, the more clamorous the people were for his immediate dismission, he yielded to them, and consented to have the subject of their separation referred to a council, to be mutually chosen, half by the people of the church and the other half by himself.

In the choice of the council, the people of Northampton insisted that Mr. Edwards should be confined to the limits of the county. This he objected to, as it was known that most of the ministers and churches in the county, had on the subject in controversy, espoused the cause of the people, and because such a limitation not only precluded him from choosing impartial men, and men who were most distinguished in the churches for their piety, learning and abilities, but virtually obliged him to concede the right of choosing the whole council to his people. They agreed to leave this question, as to the right of Mr. Edwards to go out of the county in a choice of the council, to the ministers and messengers of the five neighboring churches, who after meeting twice, and hearing the subject largely discussed, were equally divided in opinion, and of course left the main question undecided: but gave it as their unanimous advice that Mr. Edwards should have liberty to choose *some* of the council from without the county. Mr. Edwards then proposed to the church, that if the council should consist of not more than ten churches, he would choose three of these churches within the county, and two without; but even this reasonable proposition the church of Northampton repeatedly rejected. After several meetings of the church, in which they refused to comply with the terms proposed by their pastor, a meeting was called on the 3d of May, 1750, in which they voted that in the choice of a council of ten churches, Mr. Edwards might choose two out of the county. A council was accordingly convened at Northampton on the 19th of June, 1750, who, after some ineffectual attempts at reconciling the church and people to their pastor, by a majority of one, voted that it was expedient that the pastoral relation between Mr. Edwards and his church should be immediately dissolved, if the people

still persisted in desiring it.—The council then publicly proposed to the people to determine by their vote whether they insisted upon the dismission of Mr. Edwards: when more than two hundred voted for his dismission, and only twenty against it. He was accordingly dismissed June 22, 1750.

The dissenting part of the council protested, but in vain, against the rash and hasty manner in which the business was brought to an issue; and all good men were astonished that a people who had been so zealously and deservedly attached to their minister, and so blessed in his labors, should be so violent in thrusting him away from among them. Mr. Edwards, on the first day of July following, took his leave of his people in an affecting discourse from the words in 2 Cor. i. 14, in which he called their attention to the meeting of ministers and the people of their charge before the tribunal of Christ, at the final judgment.

After his dismission, while Mr. Edwards resided at Northampton, destitute of employment, he voluntarily preached to the people on occasions when they had no other person to supply the pulpit: till the town, in a meeting called for the purpose, voted that it was not agreeable to their minds that he should preach among them!!

The sufferings of Mr. Edwards now brought his virtues and his trust in Providence to the severest trial. He was deprived of his support, his family was numerous and young, he had little property for their maintenance, his health was slender, and rendered him incapable of labor, he was at a period of life too late to qualify himself for any new employment, and what added poignancy to every other trouble, he was forsaken by most of his former friends, and was the object of their most violent persecution. In this tumultuous scene he, almost alone, was undisturbed, his hope in God was an anchor of his soul sure and stedfast.—He was conscious of the integrity of his motives, and in the way of his duty he was ready to face every danger. Providence did not forsake him, but appeared for his relief in a way which he did not expect. His necessities for the present were relieved by the contributions of his friends and correspondents in Scotland, and by their instrumentality he was appointed a Missionary to the Indians at Stockbridge, with a salary adequate to his future support.

The minority of the people of Northampton were more than ever attached to Mr. Edwards, and although they were few in number, they were desirous to retain him as their minister and offered to support him accordingly.—Mr. Edwards acknowledged this proposed favor with gratitude, but at the same time considered that he, by accepting their offer, should be burthensome to them, and should be instrumental in perpetuating a division in the town, which he, more than any other, was anxious to have healed. Notwithstanding this was his own opinion, he asked the advice of an ecclesiastical council, in pursuance of which he finally declined accepting the offer of his friends at

Northampton, and took upon himself the charge of the mission at Stockbridge.

Joseph Hawley, Esq. a man of great influence in Northampton, was very active as a leader in stirring up the people against Mr. Edwards, and in procuring his dismission.—We here subjoin a letter written by him to the Rev. Mr. Hall of Sutton, a member of the council that dismissed Mr. Edwards, and which was published in a newspaper in Boston, May 19th, 1760, as a confirmation of the facts before stated, and to exhibit the transactions respecting the dismission of Mr. Edwards, in the light in which the principal actors themselves viewed it, after they had time for reflection.

To the Rev. Mr. Hall of Sutton.

NORTHAMPTON, MAY 9, 1760.

REV. SIR,

I HAVE often wished that every member of the two ecclesiastical councils, (that formerly sat in Northampton upon the unhappy differences between our former most worthy and Rev. pastor Mr. Jonathan Edwards and the church here,) whereof you were a member; I say, Sir, I have often wished every one of them truly knew my real sense of my own conduct in the affairs that the one and the other of said councils are privy to; and I have long apprehended it to be my duty not only to humble myself before God for what was unchristian and sinful in my conduct before said councils, but also to confess my faults to them, and take shame to myself therefor before them. I have often studied with myself in what manner it was practicable for me to do it; and when I understood that you, Sir, and Mr. Eaton were to be at Cold Spring at the time of the late council, I resolved to improve the opportunity fully to open my mind there to you and him thereon; and thought that probably some method might be then thought of, in which my reflections on myself touching the matters above hinted at, might be communicated to most if not all the gentlemen aforesaid, who did not reside in this county: but you know, Sir, how difficult it was for us to converse together by ourselves when at Cold Spring, without giving umbrage to that people; I therefore proposed writing to you upon the matters which I had then opportunity only just summarily to suggest; which you, Sir, signified would be agreeable to you; I therefore now undertake what I then proposed, in which I humbly ask the Divine aid; and that I may be made most freely willing fully to confess my sin and guilt to you and the world, in those instances which I have reason to suppose fell under your notice, as they were public and notorious transactions, and on account whereof, therefore, you, Sir, and all others who had knowledge thereof, had just cause to be offended at me.

And, in the first place, Sir, I apprehend, that, with the church and people of Northampton, I sinned and erred exceedingly in consenting and laboring that there should be so early a dismission of Mr. Edwards from his pastoral relation to us, even upon the supposition that he was really in a mistake in the disputed point: not only be-

cause the dispute was upon matters so very disputable in themselves, and at the greatest remove from fundamental, but because Mr. Edwards so long had approved himself a most faithful and painful pastor to said church; and also changed his sentiments in that point wholly from a tender regard to what appeared to him to be truth; and had made known his sentiments with great moderation and upon great deliberation, against all worldly motives, and from mere fidelity to his great Master, and a tender regard to the souls of his flock, as we had the highest reason to judge; which considerations now seem to me sufficient; and would, (if we had been of a right spirit) have greatly endeared him to his people, and made us, to the last degree, reluctant to parting with him, and disposed us to the exercise of the greatest candor, gentleness, and moderation: how much of the reverse whereof appeared in us, I need not tell you, Sir, who was an eye-witness of our temper and conduct.

And although it does not become me to pronounce decisively on a point so disputable as what was then in dispute, yet I beg leave to say, that I really apprehend, that it is of the highest moment to the body of this church, and to me in particular, most solicitously to inquire, whether, like the Pharisees and Lawyers in John the Baptist's time, we did not reject the counsel of God against ourselves, in rejecting Mr. Edwards and his doctrine, which was the ground of his dismission. I humbly conceive, that it highly imports us all of this church, most seriously and impartially to examine what that most worthy and able divine, about that time, published in support of the same, whereby he being dead yet speaketh.

But there were three things, Sir, especially in my own particular conduct before the first council, which have been justly matter of great grief and much trouble to me almost ever since, viz.

In the first place, I confess, Sir, that I acted very immodestly and abusively, to you, as well as injuriously to the church and myself, when, with much zeal and unbecoming assurance, I moved the council, that they would interpose to silence and stop you in an address you were making one morning to the people, wherein you were, if I do not misremember, briefly exhorting them to a tender remembrance of the former affections and harmony that has long subsisted between them and their Rev. Pastor, and the great comfort and profit which they had apprehended that they had received from his ministry; for which, Sir, I heartily ask your forgiveness; and I think, that we ought, instead of opposing an exhortation of that nature, to have received it with all thankfulness.

Another particular of my conduct before that council, which I now apprehend was criminal, and was owing to the want of that tender affection and reverend respect and esteem for Mr. Edwards which he had highly merited of me, was my strenuously opposing the adjournment of the matters submitted to that

council, for about two months; for which I declare myself unfeignedly sorry; and I with shame remember, that I did it in a peremptory, decisive, vehement, and very immodest manner.

But, Sir, the most criminal part of my conduct at that time, that I am conscious of, was my exhibiting to that council a set of arguments in writing, the drift whereof was to prove the reasonableness and necessity of Mr. Edwards' dismission in case no accommodation was then effected with mutual consent; which tract, by clear implication, contained some severe, uncharitable, and, if I do not misremember, groundless and slanderous imputations on Mr. Edwards, and expressed in bitter language; and although the original draft thereof was not done by me, yet I foolishly and sinfully consented to copy it; and, as agent for the church, to read it, and deliver it to the council, which I could never have done, if I had not had a wicked relish for perverse things; which conduct of mine, I confess was very sinful; am persuaded was highly provoking to God, and for which I am ashamed, confounded, and have nothing to answer.

As to the church's remonstrance, (as it was called,) which their committee preferred to the last of said councils, to all which I was consenting, and in the composing whereof I was very active, as also in bringing the church to their vote upon it: I would in the first place, only observe, that I do not remember any thing in that small part of it which was plainly discursive of the expediency of Mr. Edwards' re-settlement here as pastor to a part of the church, which was very exceptionable; but as to all the residue, which was much the greatest part thereof, (and I am not certain that any part was wholly free,) it was every where larded with unchristian bitterness, sarcastical and unmannerly insinuations, contained divers direct, grievous, and criminal charges and allegations against Mr. Edwards, which I have since good reason to suppose, were all founded on jealous and uncharitable mistakes, and so were really gross slanders, also many heavy and reproachful charges upon divers of Mr. Edwards' adherents and some severe censures of them all indiscriminately; all of which, (if not wholly false and groundless,) yet were altogether unnecessary, and therefore highly criminal. Indeed I am fully convinced, that the whole of that composure, excepting the small part thereof above mentioned, was totally unchristian, a scandalous, abusive, injurious libel, against Mr. Edwards and his particular friends, especially the former, and highly provoking and detestable in the sight of God; for which I am heartily sorry and ashamed; and pray I may remember it with deep abasement, and penitence all my days. Nor do I now think that the church's conduct in refusing to appear and attend before that council to support the charges and allegations in said remonstrances against Mr. Edwards and said brethren, which they demanded, was ever vindicated by all the subtle answers that were given to said demand; nor do I think, that our conduct

in that instance was capable of a defence; for it appears to me, that by making charges of scandalous matters against them before said council, we necessarily so far gave that council jurisdiction; and I own with sorrow and regret, that I zealously endeavored, that the church should perseveringly refuse to appear before said council, for the purpose above said, which I humbly pray God to forgive.

Another part of my conduct, Sir, of which I have long repented, and for which I hereby declare my hearty sorrow, was my obstinate opposition to the last council's having any conference with the church; which said council earnestly and repeatedly moved for, and which the church finally denied, (as you know.) I think it discovered a great deal of pride and vain sufficiency in the church, and showed them to be very opiniative, especially the chief sticklers, one of whom, I own, I was, and think it was running a most presumptuous risk, and acting the part of proud scorners, for us to refuse hearing, and candidly and seriously considering what that council could say or oppose to us; among whom there were divers justly in great reputation for grace and wisdom.

In these instances, Sir, of my conduct, and others, (to which you were not privy,) in the course of that most melancholy contention with Mr. Edwards, wherein I now see that I was very much influenced by vast pride, self-sufficiency, ambition, and vanity, I appear to myself vile, and doubtless much more so to others, who are more impartial; and do in the review thereof, abhor myself, and repent sorely; and if my own heart condemns me, it behoves me solemnly to remember, that God is greater, and knoweth all things; and I hereby own, Sir, that such treatment of Mr. Edwards, as is herein before mentioned, wherein I was deeply concerned and active, was particularly and very aggravatedly sinful and ungrateful in me, because I was not only under the common obligations of each individual of the society to him, as to a most able, diligent pastor; but I had also received many instances of his tenderness, goodness, and generosity to me, as a young kinsman, whom he was disposed to treat in a most friendly manner.

Indeed, Sir, I must own, that by my conduct in consulting and acting against Mr. Edwards within the time of our most unhappy disputes with him, and especially in and about that abominable remonstrance, I have so far symbolized with Balaam, Ahitophel, and Judas, that I am confounded and filled with terror oftentimes when I attend to the most painful similitude.

And I freely confess, that on account of my conduct above mentioned, I have the greatest reason to tremble at those most solemn and awful words of our Saviour, Matt. xviii. 6, and those Luke x. at the 16.: and I am most sorely sensensible, that nothing but that infinite grace and mercy which saved some of the betrayers and murderers of our blessed Lord, and the persecutors of his martyrs, can pardon me; in which alone I hope for pardon, for the sake of Christ, whose blood, (blessed

be God,) cleanseth from all sin. On the whole, Sir, I am convinced, that I have the greatest reason to say as David, "Have "mercy upon me, O God, ac- "cording to thy loving kindness, "according to the multitude of "thy tender mercies, blot out "my transgressions, wash me "thoroughly from mine iniquity, "and cleanse me from my sin; "I acknowledge my transgres- "sions, and my sin is ever be- "fore me: hide thy face from "my sins, and blot out all mine "iniquities: create in me a "clean heart, O God, and renew "a right spirit within me; cast "me not away from thy pre- "sence, and take not thy holy "Spirit from me: restore unto "me the joy of thy salvation, "and uphold me with thy free "Spirit."

And I humbly apprehend, that it greatly concerns the church of Northampton, most seriously to examine, whether the many hard speeches, spoken by many particular members, against their former pastor, some of which the church really countenanced, and especially those spoken by the church as a body, in that most vile remonstrance, are not so odious and ungodly, as to be utterly uncapable of defence; and whether said church were not guilty of great sin in being so willing and disposed, for so slight a cause, to part with so faithful and godly a minister as Mr. Edwards was. And whether ever God will hold us guiltless till we cry to him for Christ's sake, to pardon and save us from that judgment which such ungodly deeds deserve, and publicly humble and take shame to ourselves therefor. And I most heartily wish and pray that the town and church of Northampton would seriously and carefully examine whether they have not abundant cause to judge that they are now lying under great guilt in the sight of God; and whether those of us, who were concerned in that most awful contention with Mr. Edwards, can ever more reasonably expect God's favor and blessing, till our eyes are opened, and we become thoroughly convinced that we have greatly provoked the Most High, and been injurious to one of the best of men; and until we shall be thoroughly convinced that we have dreadfully persecuted Christ by persecuting and vexing that just man and servant of Christ; until we shall be humble as in the dust therefor, and till we openly, in full terms, and without baulking the matter, confess the same before the world, and most humbly and earnestly seek forgiveness of God, and do what we can to honor the memory of Mr. Edwards, and clear it of all the aspersions which we unjustly cast upon him, since God has been pleased to put it beyond our power to ask his forgiveness.—Such terms, I am persuaded, the great and righteous God will hold us to, and that it will be in vain for us to hope to escape with impunity in any other way. This I am convinced of with regard to myself, and this way I most solemnly propose to take myself, (if God in his mercy shall give me opportunity,) that so by making free confession to God and man of my sin and guilt, and publicly taking shame to myself therefor, I may give glory to the God of Israel,

and do what in me lies, to clear the memory of that venerable man from the wrongs and injuries I was so active in bringing on his reputation and character; and I thank God that he has been pleased to spare my life and opportunity therefor to this time, and am sorry that I have delayed the affair so long.

Altho' I made the substance of almost all the foregoing reflections in writing, but not exactly in the same manner, to Mr. Edwards and the brethren who adhered to him, in Mr. Edward's life, and before he removed from Stockbridge, and I have reason to believe that he, from his great candour and charity, heartily forgave me and prayed for me: yet because that was not generally known, I look on myself obliged to take further steps; for while I kept silence, my bones waxed old, &c.

For all these, my great sins, therefore, in the first place, I humbly and most earnestly ask forgiveness of God; nextly, of the relatives and near friends of Mr. Edwards. I also ask the forgiveness of all those who were called Mr. Ed wards' adherents; and of all the members of the ecclesiastical councils above mentioned; and lastly, of all Christian pepole, who have had any knowledge of the matters above said, or any of them.

I have no desire, Sir, that you should make any secret of this letter; but desire you would communicate the same to whom you shall judge proper; and I purpose, (if God shall give me opportunity) to procure it to be published in some one of the public newspapers; for I cannot devise any other way of making known my sentiments of the foregoing matters to all who ought to be acquainted therewith, and therefore I think I ought to do it, whatever remarks I may foresee will be made thereon.

Probably when it comes out, some of my acquaintance will pronounce me quite over-run with vapours; others will be furnished with matter for mirth and pleasantry; others will cursorily pass it over, as relating to matters quite stale; but some I am persuaded, will rejoice to see me brought to a sense of my sin and duty; and I myself shall be conscious that I have done something of what the nature of the case admits, toward undoing what is, and long has been, to my greatest remose and trouble that it was ever done.

Sir, I desire that none would entertain a thought from my having spoken respectfully of Mr. Edwards, that I am disaffected to our present pastor; for the very reverse is true; and I have a reverend esteem, real value and hearty affection for him, and bless God, that he has, notwithstanding all our unworthiness, given us one to succeed Mr. Edwards, who, (as I have reason to hope,) is truly faithful.

I conclude this long letter, by heartily desiring your prayers, that my repentance of my sins above mentioned may be unfeigned and genuine, and such as God in infinite mercy, for Christ's sake, will accept; and I beg leave to suoscribe myself,

Sir, your real,
though very unworthy friend,
and obedient servant,
JOSEPH HAWLEY.

Mr. Edwards was about this time appointed by the Board of commissioners for Indian affairs, established at Boston, a Missionary to the Indians at Stockbridge in the western part of Massachusetts to succeed the Rev. Mr. Sergeant who had then lately deceased. By the advice of the council convened at Northampton as hath been mentioned, he was induced to accept of this appointment and accordingly removed to Stockbridge with his family and was installed as a Missionary to the Indians there by an ecclesiastical council convened August 8th, 1751.

At Stockbridge Mr. Edwards found himself in a retired situation adapted to the uninterrupted pursuit of his favorite studies. He continued there about six years preaching to the universal acceptance both of the Indians and the English people residing there ; but without any very remarkable success. In this period he made rapid advances in the acquisition of knowledge, he pursued his studies on a more comprehensive scale and with more success than at any former period of his life. He here composed his greatest and most profound work, An Inquiry into the modern notion of that freedom of will which is supposed essential to Moral Agency ; a work which for clearness and precision of thought, for force and for accuracy of reasoning on a most intricate subject stands almost unrivalled. He also here composed his treatise on Original Sin, and the outlines of his Posthumous Work entitled, The History of the Work of Redemption.

Thus his labors apparently confined within a narrow circle, have been more than ever extensively useful.

An event soon after happened, which again called him from a retreat that had become dear to him, into a situation more conspicuous, and an employment perhaps more important than any former one of his life.

The Rev. Mr. Aaron Burr, President of Nassau-Hall, a College at Princeton in New-Jersey, died on the 24th of September, 1757. This gentleman was son in law to Mr. Edwards, and at the first meeting of the Trustees of the College after his decease, Mr. Edwards was chosen to succeed him in the Presidency of the College. This invitation was altogether unexpected to him, and it was with very great reluctance, that he was induced to quit his peaceful abode, and his favorite studies, and at an advanced age with a numerous family, remove to a distant place and resume studies and employments which he for many years had laid aside. At this time, too, he was much engaged in preparing for publication, his Posthumous Work, the History of the Work of Redemption, which must be interrupted and perhaps abandoned if he should accept of the office to which he was invited.—He, in this, as in most of the important transactions of his life, suffered himself to be directed by the advice of judicious and disinterested friends : a council of whom met at Stockbridge on the 4th of January, 1758, at the request of himself and his people, and after mature deliberation, expressed their opinion that it was his duty

to accept of the Presidency of the College at Princeton. On hearing their determination, Mr. Edwards was very much affected, he felt a real sorrow at the thought of parting from the people of his charge at Stockbridge; but to the call of duty he was ever obedient.

Accordingly he himself repaired to Princeton, and was to the universal acceptation of the Trustees and of the College, introduced to the chief seat in that learned society. His family still remained at Stockbridge, expecting to remove in the succeeding spring.

Mr. Edwards had scarcely entered upon his official duties before it became necessary, from the prevalence of the small pox, that he should be inoculated. The disorder in its progress was at first mild and he appeared to be almost out of danger, when a secondary fever attacked him, and on the 22d day of March, 1758, terminated his life. He possessed his reason to the last moment of his life and met his death with perfect composure, not with Stoic indifference but with a Christians hope.—He left, with a daughter, who was present, his dying love and advice to his wife and children and gave particular directions as to the order of his funeral; that it should be decent and that the expenses which otherwise would have been bestowed upon his obsequies, should be given in charity to the poor. Thus in his death as in his life he had the poor always in remembrance.

To his friends who were with him and who were expressing among themselves their regret at his approaching death, when he appeared insensible and unable to speak, he said, TRUST IN GOD AND YE NEED NOT FEAR. These were the last words which he ever spake, and though few they seemed to comprise the whole instruction and advice which he had given, in the course of a long and very useful life. Throughout his whole sickness not a murmuring or discontented expression was heard to fall from his lips, and when he expired, without a groan or a struggle he fell asleep.—His daughter, the widow of President Burr survived him but a few days and his own most excellent consort was in the month of October following after a short and violent illness, buried by the side of her husband.

Abstract of Faber on the Prophecies.

No. IV.

(Continued from p. 184.)

IN the xi. Chapter of Daniel the prophet gives an enlarged account of the subversion of *the Medo-Persian empire*, the rise of the *Macedonian empire*, its division into *four kingdoms*, *the wars* of the kings of *Syria and Egypt*, and *the conquest of Jerusalem* by *the Romans*, which he had before *briefly* described in his *symbolical predictions*, as a chronological introduction to the history of *the king who was to magnify himself above every god:* as the vision of *the four beasts* had conducted us to the tyrannical reign of *the papal horn*, and that of *the ram* and he-goat and to the exploits of *the Mohammedan horn*,

Complete justice having been done, in our author's opinion, to the first part of this minute prophecy by Bp. Newton, he passes over it: and comes immediately to the question, *What power* did the Spirit of inspiration describe under the character of *the king who was to magnify himself above every god?*

Bp. Newton's opinion he states to be, that *the king* means primarily, *the Christian Roman emperors*, and secondarily, *the Greek emperors in the East*, and *the Bishops of Rome in the West*. He was *an antichristian power* and his tyranny in the church was revealed first in *the Roman emperors*, in summoning and directing public councils, and in acting as supreme head of the church; and especially, in *the Greek emperors* and *the Bishops of Rome* after the division of the empire; who exalted themselves above all laws human and divine. *The king's disregarding the desire of women* he applies to *monasticism*, whether oriental, or occidental; and to the *constrained celibacy of the clergy*; his veneration of *Mahuzzim*, or tutelary demigods, to *the idolatrous worship of saints and angels*; and his *wars with the king of the south*, and *the king of the North* to *the invasion of the Eastern empire* by *the Saracens*, and *its final subversion by the Turks*. To this scheme are urged the following objections:

1. This exposition makes this last prediction of Daniel little more than a repetition of a former one, as the tyranny of the papacy had been *previously* discussed and dismissed, a power evidently most prominent in the scheme.

2. The scheme wants unity and simplicity: it makes the king *a complex power*, exerted *first* in the empire in general, and *afterwards*, partly, in *the East*, and partly in *the West*; in his latter character, *a compound* of *the Greek* emperor, and *the Pope*. Each of *the little horns* symbolizes *a single power*; whence we may reasonably conclude from analogy, that *the king* here mentioned is *a single power* likewise. Mr. Mede had advocated the scheme above proposed, with this difference; that he also includes in the character of the king even the *pagan Roman state* from the time of *Antiochus Epiphanes*. This mode of exposition accords very ill with the definite simplicity of Daniel's prophecies. We are bewildered in a succession of changes from *pagan Rome* to *Christian Rome*; from the Emperors *before* to the emperors *after* the division of the empire; from the Emperors of *Constantinople* to the popes of *Rome*; from the *East* to the *West*, and from *the West to the East*; from *the State* to *the Church*, and from *the Church* to *the State*; and from *the imperious adoration paid to the Roman pontiff* to *the struggles of the Constantinopolitan monarch with the Saracens and Turks*.

3. *It cannot accord with the chronological series of events as detailed by Daniel, in regular succession, in this his concluding prophecy.*— Our Lord refers *the abomination of desolation* mentioned in the 31st verse of the xi. chapter to *the sacking of Jerusalem by the Romans*. And the Bp. sensible of this, very justly applies the two following verses to *the pagan persecutors* of *the primitive Christians*, with like propriety he applies the 34th verse to the days of Constantine. He has not been equally successful in applying the 35 verse, as he does, to the quarrels of *Christians among each other*, as those of the Consubstantialists with the Arians. *The men of understanding* mentioned here, and in the 33d verse, are men of *the same principles*; men *professing* and *acting up to the pure truths of the*

gospel, in opposition to *the heathen*, in the former instance, and to *corrupt Christians*, in the latter. That this is the case, will appear, if we consider, that these last *men of understanding* will continue in *a persecuted state, to the time of the end*, or to the termination of the 1260 *years;* the persecution here referred to then, must be that during the reign of *the papal horn.* A definite period, however, during that reign, seems to be pointed out by the striking language of the prophet, even the *era of the reformation.* These men of understanding, like the first, are represented as not satisfied with assembling their congregations, in *the deep recesses of mountains and forests* like the Waldenses; but as *boldly* and *openly* coming forward, as laboring to propagate their tenets, and to *purge, reform* and *make white* a corrupt and degenerate church. And indeed, these martyrs of the reformation, "have filled the whole world with their doctrine." With respect to the author of this *second* persecution, it is, as has been seen, *the little horn* of the revived Roman beast, this power and *not the king* was to wear out the saints of the Most High during the period of 1260 *years.* Nor are the sufferings of these men of understanding at all connected with the tyranny of *the king.* Whence it will follow, that as all Daniel's prophecies are *strictly chronological*, we must look for *the king*, not before, but *after the period* of *the reformation.* And therefore he cannot be, either *the Roman emperor, the Constantinopolitan emperor, the Pope*, or impostor *Mohammed*, but must be some other power perfectly distinct from them all.

Should it be said, that these objections however plausible cannot be valid, because the trait in the character of *the king*, his *disregard to the desire of women* decidedly points out that *complex power* which discouraged marriage both in *the East* and in *the West:* the author replies, *The desire of women* does not mean the desire *to have women or wives;* but it means that which women *desire to have.* Thus *the desire of Israel* does not mean the wish *to have Israel*, but that which Israel *wished to have. The desire of thy soul*, is not the wish *to have thy soul*, but that which thy soul *wishes to have:* and *the desire of the wicked* is not the wish *to have the wicked*, but that which *the wicked wish to have:* and to add no more, *the desire of all nations* is not the wish *to be master of all nations*, but that which all nations desire, even *the promised Messiah.* That *the desire of women* means, as explained, that which women *desire to have*, is further evident from the context. Daniel is speaking of *objects* of religious worship, *true* and *false;* all of which *this king* was alike to disregard; and among these, he was as little to regard *the desire of women*, as any of the others. The question then is, what object of religious worship is pointed out by *the desire of women?* to which the answer is, *the Messiah.* The title is applicable to him, and to him alone. The prediction of *the promised seed* was delivered specially to *Eve:* it was *her* seed, not *Adam's;* which was to bruise the serpent's head. With this desire, on the birth of Cain, forgetting that he was Adam's seed, as well as her own, she exulted, saying, I have gotten *a man* even *Jehovah himself.* Hence *the vehement desire* of Sarah, Rebecca and Rachel, to have children; and hence the horror which the Israelitish women entertained of barren-

ness. The Messiah was indeed *the desire of all nations;* but in a mysterious sense, *the desire of women*, as he was to be born of a pure virgin by the power of the Holy Ghost. This being the meaning of *the desire of women*, it is certain that *the king* cannot be either *the Pope*, or *the Constantinopolitan emperor*, for amidst all the abominations of *the Papacy*, the divinity of Christ was faithfully preserved. And though some of *the Eastern Emperors* might be Arians, yet they never blotted the name of Christ from their religious creed; nor could they be said, in the sense of this passage, *to disregard the desire of women.*

But further, it may be said the king's paying honor to *a strange god*, and to *Mahuzzim*, or *tutelary deities*, well accords with *the Papal worship of saints and angels.* Be it so, still, there is no reason why it should be confined, *exclusively*, to them, it may be paid to *any other tutelary demi-gods whatever.* The coincidence of *the king's* character with that of *the Pope*, in this point, cannot establish their identity, when so many objections present themselves to such an opinion.

The author dissents from the position of Mr. Mede and Bp. Newton that *the man of sin* is an exact transcript of *the king* predicted by Daniel. On the cantrary, he perceives no sort of resemblance between them, except in their both exalting themselves above all that is called God; though in this they agree, their actions plainly mark a difference in their characters. *The man of sin* was to be revealed when *the imperial authority in Rome* was taken out of the way: *the king*, after the *second persecution* of the men of understanding, *at the reformation. The man of sin*, was to cause himself to be worshipped in the temple of God. *The king* was to venerate *a foreign god*, and along with him, *certain tutelary deities.* He claimed not, that himself should be worshipped. *The man of sin* was to work pretended miracles; no pretence that *the king* should claim supernatural powers. *The king* was to divide the land among the champions of *his tutelary deities*, for *a price:* nothing of this sort has been ascribed to *the man of sin*, nor was ever performed by *the Pope. The king* was to be engaged in wars with *the kings of the North* and *the South:* nothing of this is predicable of *the man of sin*, and to help out the difficulty, *the Eastern emperor* with his wars with *the Saracens and Turks* is brought in, and together with *the Pope* forms *one complex person* on the Bishop's sheme; and yet so, the difficulty remains, for the wars in question were to take place *at the time of the end*, or, at the close of the 1260 *years*, a time yet future. *The king*, then, and *the man of sin* must be entirely different powers. What power is designated by *the king* may be gathered from the following considerations:

The chronological series of events which shows that *this formidable power* cannot be either *popery* or *Mohammedism* will, in *these last days*, help us to point out with considerable precision *the state* intended by it. We must, as has been seen, look for this *impious tyrant* after the reformation; and we are now removed but about *sixty years* from the close of the great period of 1260 *years:* hence we may reasonably conclude, that we are now living in *the last times.* The signs of these times are visible. The superstition of *the latter days* is now supported rather from motives of policy, than of religion. The main feature of the age is not that of *giving heed to seducing spirits*, and *doctrines of*

tutelary saints; of *speaking his impious hypocrisy*, of *forbidding to marry* and *commanding to abstain from meats*; or of *voluntary humiliation in the worship of angels.*— These mummeries of *the latter days*, indeed, still exist; and they will exist to the end of the 1260 years: but, certainly, the impieties of *the last times* now form the most *prominent feature* of the age. Men are now professedly *lovers of their own selves, disobedient to parents, without natural affection, false accusers, traitors, heady, high-minded, resisters of the truth, reprobate concerning the faith, scoffers, walking after their own lusts, denying the Lord that bought them; despising government; beguiling unstable souls; speaking great swelling words of vanity; promising men liberty, while they themselves are the servants of corruption: denying both the Father and the Son. Individuals* of this description have always existed; antichrist, however, was not to be revealed, in *an embodied form*, till *the last days*, till there had *first* been *a great apostacy*; till the *reign of superstition* was *nearly* over. At the head of this black catalogue of the vices which characterize *the last times* we may justly place *Atheism* and *Infidelity*. No person, it would seem, can read over the description of *the king*, and the vices of *the last times*, and not be convinced that they are closely connected together. Like the antichrist of St. John, he was to be a professed atheist: and as such *to speak marvellous things against the God of gods*; not to regard *the God of his fathers*, nor *the desire of women*, nor *to regard any god*; but *to magnify himself above all.* We must then expect the appearance of *this king* in *the last days*, in the time of *the scoffers*, in the time, in a word, *in which we live*. Indeed we need not hesitate, when we contemplate *the character* of *the king*, *the time* of his *manifestation*, and *recent events*, now fresh in our memory, to pronounce him to be *revolutionary France.*

Here the author proceeds to a *more minute survey* of *the character* of *the king* and observes in substance as follows: As *the king* was to rise up after *the second persecution* of *the men of understanding*; or, in other words, after *the reformation*: so the power of infidel France commenced at this very period. As *the king* was to magnify himself above every God, true or false: so has *the atheistical republic*, *openly denying the very existence of the deity*. Still, however contradictory it might seem, *the king* was to have *a god*, *a strange or foreign god*, whom his fathers never knew, a god at the head of a host of *Mahuzzim* or *tutelary gods*, whose prototype must be sought for in the theological code of some other country. *Liberty* was expressly *deified* by the Romans. A *spurious freedom* utterly inconsistent with religion or morals was the soul of the French revolution: *liberty* and *equality* were *the watch words* of the conspirators, to sound the praises of *this liberty* was the spirit of all their harrangues and projects: nay, in imitation of the Romans, they adopted the *literal worship* of *liberty*; and like them appointed festivals in honor of *reason*, *the country*, *the constitution* and *the virtues*. *Liberty* then must have been *the foreign god* honored by *the infidel king*, which he placed at the head of his inferior *Mahuzzim*; among these were canonized even dead men, Voltaire, Rousseau, Mirabeau, Marat and Ankerstrom. The church of St. Genevieve was converted into a repository for the remains of their

great men, or *pagan temple*, by the name of *the Pantheon;* an avowed copy of the ancient Roman Pantheon. Hither the remains of Voltaire and Rousseau were conveyed in a magnificent procession; and the bones of Voltaire, that arch enemy of Christ, were placed on the high altar, and incense offered to them. Such have been *the tutelary gods of the infidel king*. Disregarding *the god of his fathers* and *the Desire of women*, he has revived the adoration of *the Mahuzzim of Paganism;* and though *a professed atheist*, has prostrated himself before *a foreign god*, whom his fathers never knew.

Here then we behold *the rise of Antichrist; the kingdom which denies the Father and the Son:* a power perfectly distinguishable from *the papacy*, which, though grossly idolatrous and superstitious, never denied either *the Father or the Son. The universal Bishop*, or *man of sin*, indeed, has been *the precursor* of antichrist; but not antichrist himself. To complete the character of *the infidel king* the prophet adds three further particulars, which correspond with the conduct of *atheistical France*, no less than the bolder outlines of his picture.

1. The king was to cause *the upholders* of his *tutelary deities* together with *the strange god*, whom he acknowledged, *to rule over many. The king* was to cause *liberty* then and the supporters of the allegorical deities of the *infidel republic*, or in other words, the principles of the French revolution to rule over many. The avowed principle of France has been to extend the empire of the champions of *her Mahuzzim*, and to cause the whole world to bow down before the shrine of that imaginary deity, which they misname *liberty*. The established doctrine there is, that the citizen and the legislator ought to acknowledge *no other worship*, than that of *liberty; no other altars than those* of *their country; no other priests than the magistrates*. The National convention, for the purpose of extending their system, passed a decree of fraternity to all rebels against their lawful sovereigns; and that the system itself should be extended to all countries occupied by their armies. And accordingly wherever *the infidel tyrant* has prevailed, he has caused his *strange god*, and *the upholders* of his Mahuzzim, *to rule over many*. Of this truth *Holland, Switzerland, Piedmont, Germany* and some other States are witnesses.

2. *The king was to honor his Mahuzzim, together with his foreign god, with gold and silver, and precious stones, and desirable things.* This part of the prophecy has been accomplished by *Infidel France* both at home and abroad. When Italy was plundered of the finest specimens of the arts, and these were transported to France, and declared to be the sole property of *the Sovereign People*, *Liberty* was the deity thus honored with *desirable things;* for liberty was that which sanctioned every violation of private rights. When the ornaments of the churches were either confiscated, or carried off by the infuriated mob, *Liberty, Reason* and *the Republican virtues* were *the Mahuzzim* thus honored with *gold* and *silver* and *precious stones*. When the noble church of *St. Genevieve was desecrated* under the name of *the Pantheon* to *the tutelary gods of infidelity*, the *foreign god* and *his Mahuzzim* received the highest honors which *the atheistical king* could bestow.

3 *The king was likewise to divide the land for a price.* He was to take it

from its former possessors, and divide it among his adherents, the champions of his *Mahuzzim*, on being paid *a certain price* for it. This never was done by *the Pope*, or *the Eastern emperor*, or by any power since the reformation. Conquered lands indeed have often *been divided* by and among the victors, but this power was not merely *to divide* the land, but to *divide it for a price*. Exactly such has been the conduct of *the atheistical republic*. The French revolution has produced not only a change of *government*; but, what is altogether peculiar, a complete change of *landed property*. By a master stroke of policy, with a view to prevent for ever a counter revolution, the lands of the crown, the church and the nobility were taken from their lawful owners, and vested in the nation. This step being taken, the lands were sold at a price, as is well known, to the partizans of anarchy and atheism, and thus it became the direct interest of every land-holder throughout France to prevent the return of *the Bourbons*.

To this scheme of interpretation the author supposes the following objection. *The infidel king* cannot be *revolutionary France* because the French people have, at present, thrown aside their atheistical hatred to Christianity, and have once more avowed themselves *papists*. To which he answers,

1. That *Popery*, though once more established in France, is evidently *a mere political puppet*; as little regarded by the people as by their rulers; and the principles of atheism are as predominant as ever. Nor can we expect, that the task of converting a nation can succeed, when undertaken by one who has alternately professed himself *an atheist, a Mohammedan and a papist*.

2. Humanly speaking *popery* could not exist, through the remaining part of the destined period of 1260 years, had France persevered in her profession of atheism; for, as the regions where its seat has been are little more than mere provinces of France, trembling at her nod, and subservient to all her schemes of aggrandizement, she was able to subvert it, and to all appearance must have done it, had she pursued what was evidently her original plan of extirpating Christianity in all its forms. Thus it is that *the infidel king* has, by the overruling providence of God, become the supporter of that superstition, which he had at first labored to destroy.

3. The fact objected affords an argument *for*, and not *against* the present mode of interpretation. Comparing the different prophecies together it appears, that the war of *the infidel king* in Palestine where he will perish *between the two seas*, must necessarily be the same *as the war of the beast* in the same country, and at the same period, where he also, with *the false prophet* and *the kings of the Roman earth* will perish at the dreadful slaughter of Megiddo. This war will be *a holy war* for the prophet Joel, speaking of this time and event, says, *war shall be sanctified*; and at this very time, the restoration of the Jews will commence; hence it is evident, that a coalition between *the infidel king* and *the false prophet* at the time of the end must exist, in order to constitute the war he will carry on in Palestine *a holy war*; and therefore this coalition, must, at some time before this, have been formed. The existence therefore of this coalition instead of opposing, really confirms the interpretation contended for. The king then is *a motley* monster, *inwardly an atheist* and *outwardly a papist*: still doing according to his will; and still *scourging* the members of that

apostacy which he now professes *to venerate.*

The remainder of the prophecy relative to *the king* brings against him an opponent in *a mighty king of the North* and *a less powerful king of the South.* Not indeed those *kings of the North* and *the South* mentioned at the beginning of this prophecy which were the kings of Syria and Egypt, and whose power has long since been broken; but entirely different potentates. These will successively attack *the atheistical king*, who notwithstanding shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over; and shall enter into the glorious land, and seize upon the land of Egypt. Who *these kings of the North* and *the South* are, the revolution of events will best discover. From a view however of *the existing*, and *probably future*, state of the great European commonwealth, we can scarcely doubt but that *the king of the North* is the colossal monarchy of Russia. What state is meant by *the king* of *the South* is not quite so easy to determine. These wars are yet future, for they are to exist at *the time of the end*, or, after the expiration of the 1260 years. Assuredly, however, will *antichrist* hereafter invade Palestine, in conjunction with *the false prophet*, and *the kings of the Latin earth;* and will succeed in planting the tabernacles of his palaces *between the seas* in *the glorious holy mountain;* yet, notwithstanding his temporary success, he shall come to his end, and none shall stay him. Awful as the scenes have been which we have seen, yet a more dreadful prospect extends before us, ere the blessed reign of Christ upon earth shall commence: for at the time when the atheistical tyrant is destroyed, "there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was, since there was a nation, even to that same time;" it shall be terrible, however, only to the enemies of the church of Christ; those who have come out of *the mystic Babylon* shall not be partakers of *her last plagues.*

The kindred prophecies of St. John, with respect, especially, to the great period of 1260 years, will next attract our attention.

[To be continued.]

An Abridgment of Bryant's Observations on the Plagues of Egypt, &c.

(Continued from p. 187.)

CONCLUSION.

THE Egyptians abounded with emblematical deities, and were beyond measure attached to them; and their learning, as well as their outward sanctity, made their religion very specious, and captivating to those who were witnesses of their rites. This people were likewise scrupulous observers of signs and omens. If such then was their disposition, and they were, out of a superstitious fear, continually attending to portents and presages, and making false inferences, to the great abuse of their own reason, and the seduction of others, we see a further analogy and propriety in God's judgments. He with great wisdom as well as justice exhibited before their eyes some real prodigies, which could not be mistaken; and punished them in their own way for their credulity and su-

perstition. It was not the occultation of a luminary, the glancing of a meteor in the atmosphere, much less an usual birth, or the fantastic flight of a bird, which now demanded their attention. Their sacred river was universally polluted and turned to blood. The very dust of their sanctified soil was rendered infectious, and produced nauseous boils and blains. Their serene air became overcast; and rain and hail, lightning and thunder, with fire mingled with rain, ensued: phenomena grievous to behold, and fatal in their consequences, such as before were never known in Egypt. Further, the children of light, the offspring of the sun, were condemned to a preternatural state of night. Their god, the luminary, rose at his stated time, and performed his function; yet could not dispel this painful, oppressive, and impenetrable darkness. All these, as well as the other judgments, were real prodigies, and, as I have before remarked, were pointed and significant. Their force and purport would have been in a great measure lost upon any other people; but they were particularly applicable to the Egyptians, as they bore a strict analogy with the superstitions and idolatry of that nation.

These judgments were stiled signs, as well as wonders; and very justly. For they were not introduced merely as arbitrary marks of power; but had a particular scope and meaning, as I have attempted to show. There are many passages in scripture which will show the antiquity of that idolatry, and of those customs, from which my arguments are drawn. Many prohibitions in the law directly point this way. The second commandment in the decalogue seems to have been framed with a view to the worship of Egypt. To any people, who had not been conversant in that country, it had been sufficient to have said,—*Thou shalt make no graven image, nor frame any similitude of things.* But the commandment is dilated, and the nature of the objects pointed out, for the sake of the Israelites. They were not to make to themselves an *image* or *likeness of any thing that is in heaven above; or that is in the earth beneath; or that is in the water under the earth;* nor were they *to bow down or worship them*, either real or represented. By this is intimated, that they were not to make a likeness of the sun, or of the moon; of man, or of beast; of fly, or creeping thing; of fish, or crocodile. How prone the Israelites were to this symbolical worship, and how necessary it was to give them warning, may be seen by the threat, and by the blessings, which immediately follow. For though they are applicable to every one of these ordinances, yet they are introduced here, and particularly subjoined to this second commandment, that it may be in the strongest manner enforced.

The attachment of this people to the rites of Egypt may be further seen by the repeated admonitions of their great lawgiver; and particularly by the cautions, which he gives at large in the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy, verses 15—19. Whoever is at all acquainted with the

ancient religion of Egypt, will see every article of their idolatry included in this address. He will likewise see the propriety of these cautions to a people who had so long sojourned in that country.

I have mentioned that this worship was of very early date; for the Egyptians very soon gave into a dark and mystic mode of devotion; suitable to the gloom and melancholy of their tempers. To this they were invincibly attached, and consequently averse to any alteration. This is what I thought proper to offer concerning the wisdom and design, witnessed in these judgments upon the Egyptians; and concerning the analogy which they bore to the crimes and idolatry of that people.

As Egypt abounded with insects, some of the judgments which the people suffered might be thought to have been brought about by natural means. For both the soil and climate were adapted to the production of frogs, and flies, and other vermine; and they certainly did produce them in abundance. All this may be granted; and yet such is the texture of the holy scriptures, and these great events were by divine appointment so circumstanced, that the objection may be easily shown to be idle; and that none of these evils could have been brought about by the ordinary course of things. Whoever considers the history attentively, will be obliged to determine, as the priests did, and say in every instance, *this was the finger of God.* In respect to the flies in particular, they must have been brought upon the country miraculously, on account of the time of year. These insects breed chiefly in marshy places, when the waters decrease in summer and autumn, and where moisture still abounds. Now this season in Egypt was in September and October, after the subsiding of the river. Soon after the Equinox, and during the month of October, the ground began to appear; which being covered with slime and mud, produced flies and all kinds of insects. But the children of Israel took their journey from Egypt at a different time of the year. They set out upon the fifteenth of the month Abib, which answers to the first of April. The plagues brought upon the Egyptians were doubtless in a series antecedent to this season. They were ten in number: consequently there were nine intervals between them: but of what duration each of these judgments was, and what portion of time is to be allotted to each interval is uncertain. It is intimated that there was a *respite;* and we are told, in the first instance, after the river had been turned to blood, that this respite amounted to a week. The duration of each judgment must also be taken into the account. The death of the first born, which wast the last, could not have taken up many hours. All was well at even; and the cry was at midnight. The darkness which preceded lasted three days. And if we allow the same time for the other plagues, one with another, the first operation must have happened near three months before the Exodus.

We are in consequence of this carried back from the first of April to January and February when some of these judgments were brought about. But these were the coldest months in Egypt, and the most ungenial of any; so that, as I have before said, none of these noxious animals, brought upon the country, could have been produced at such a season in a natural way. This must have been apparent not only to the Egyptians, but to the Israelites, for whose sakes these judgments were displayed; and who must have seen the hand of God triumphing visibly over the powers of darkness.

Disinterested Affection.

The charity which seeketh not her own, illustrated by example, in the conduct of the apostle Paul.

I. Corinthians x. 33.

"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved."

A CLEAR understanding of Paul's meaning in these words, may contribute very considerably towards giving us just and clear ideas of that charity or love, which is so often and so abundantly inculcated in the New Testament, as containing the essence of gospel holiness—of all true religion.

By his pleasing all men in all things, the apostle meant, in general, that he accommodated himself to their humors, prejudices, and weaknesses, in all things which were indifferent, or in which he could lawfully do it; cautiously avoiding, so far as he could with a good conscience, whatever was stumbling or offensive to any; laboring, at the expense of his present convenience and worldly interest, to gain their attention to the most important truth, under the most favorable circumstances for bringing them to the belief and reception of it. This is evident from the preceding context; and from chapter ix. 19—22.

In conducting thus, the apostle sought not his own profit. That is, he did not aim at his own accommodation, ease, advantage, or worldly interest, or at *any such personal interest*, as might consist in competition with the best good of others, or with opposition to their true and real happiness. But he herein sought the profit of many—their real spiritual benefit, that they might be saved.

For the sake of the spiritual advantage of many, and to contribute to their salvation, he was careful to please them, at the expense of his present convenience; and by laborious services and painful sufferings, involving great self-denial, he did all in his power for the accomplishment of their salvation.—This he sought in contradistinction from, or at least in preference to, any interest or advantage of his own, from such sources as were distinct from, or opposed to, their true interest and real happiness.

This, however, did not imply, that Paul had no regard to, or aim at his own pleasure and happiness, in all that he did for the profit of others, that they might

be saved. It only implied, that he was of such a disposition, that he experienced greater satisfaction and pleasure in the happiness of many, and in contributing to promote it, though with great labor, expense and self-denial, than in any mere personal enjoyments independent of, and unconnected with the happiness of others, and especially, in opposition to it: or in other words, that the real happiness of many was a *source* of greater pleasure and happiness to him, than any personal accommodations or enjoyments, which were wholly independent of, and unconnected with their happiness.

Paul was of such a peculiar disposition, that the happiness of others was a source of the most sublime joy and happiness to him. His happiness was, so to speak, bound up in the happiness of others—in their true spiritual welfare and felicity. In seeing this, and contributing to promote it, he experienced such pleasure and satisfaction—such joy and happiness, as no worldly accommodations or enjoyments could produce, nor any worldly losses or personal sufferings destroy. How forcibly doth he repeatedly express this in his epistles?

See 1 Thess. iii. 5—10. "For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest, by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labor be in vain. But now, when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that you have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you: therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith. For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord. For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God; night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith" 2 Cor. xii. 15. "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you the less I be loved." And Philip. ii. 17. "And if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all."

Hence it is undeniably evident, that Paul was of such a temper and disposition, that the happiness of others was a source of peculiar satisfaction and joy to his heart; and therefore, that in seeking, even by laborious services, painful sufferings, and great self-denial, not his own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved, he did not act in opposition to his own pleasure, *on the whole;* but from the leading inclination of his heart, and most effectually promoted his own pleasure and happiness.

This may be, in some measure, illustrated by the following similitude. The chief magistrate of a nation, by whatever name he is called whether King, Emperor, or President, is in such circumstances, that if so disposed, he might live in ease and pleasure, and collect a vast estate, at his country's expense. But he is of such a

public, benevolent spirit, that these things are no source of happiness to him, in comparison with, and especially in opposition to, the real interest, welfare and happiness of the people, with whose government he is entrusted. No interest lies so near his heart, as the welfare and happiness of this people. Nothing else would afford him such consummate pleasure and joy, as to see their interest and happiness secured, and established on a permanent basis; and nothing else would be so painful to his heart, and so completely destroy all his happiness, as to see them deprived of their most valuable rights and privileges, and reduced to a state of the most abject wretchedness. Hence, instead of indulging ease and pleasure, or employing the advantages of his situation for amassing wealth, and aggrandizing himself and family, to the neglect and detriment of the national weal, he applies himself, with indefatigable industry, to the discharge of the duties of his station and office for the good of the nation. To this object all his studies, and all his exertions are steadily directed, and with such intenseness and ardor, as frequently to intrude upon the ordinary hours of refreshment and rest.

If he is furnished with an ample support he values and esteems it, principally, as it puts it in his power to be more useful and do more good, than he would otherwise be in a situation to do. If his authority and influence are very great and extensive, he takes pleasure therein, on account of the greater and more extensive good, which he is thereby enabled to do for the nation.—If he is highly esteemed and greatly respected *abroad*, as well as at home, he rejoices in it, principally, as it redounds to and serves to promote the honor and happiness of the nation. And in proportion as he beholds the people free, prosperous, wise, virtuous, and happy, he is happy himself—happy in their happiness, by whatever pains and expense to himself it has been attained and secured.

Such a supreme ruler, it is evident at first view, seeks not his own profit, but the profit of his nation, that they may be happy. And yet, it is equally evident, that he doth not act against the leading inclination of his heart, but exactly agreeable to it, so as to afford it the highest gratification, and most effectually to promote his own pleasure and happiness.

So the apostle Paul, whilst he pleased all men in all things, seeking not his own profit but the profit of many, that they might be saved, denying himself of many things, to accommodate their weaknesses, humours, and prejudices, that he might the more readily gain their attention to the truth, laboring night and day for their benefit, and submitting to numerous hardships, dangers, and sufferings, to promote their spiritual and eternal happiness, acted not in opposition to the leading propensity or inclination of his heart; but in conformity to it, and for the gratification of it, so as did very eminently promote his own pleasure and happiness. For, like the benevolent ruler, he was of such a disposition, that living in ease and

pleasure, wealth and slpendor, was no source of joy or happiness to him, in comparison with the spiritual advantage, the holiness and happiness of his fellow creatures. And, therefore, in seeking and promoting this, and seeing it obtained, though at the expense of his worldly ease and interest, by laborious services and painful sufferings, he experienced a far higher gratification, and much greater pleasure and happiness, than he could possibly have obtained by a contrary conduct.

Thus, in labouring and suffering and denying himself for the profit of many, that they might be saved, Paul had a steady view to that interest which was most dear to his heart, a source of the greatest joy and satisfaction to him, and in the attainment of which he obtained his own happiness, the very happiness which he desired and sought. It may be proper to observe once more,

The *many*, whose profit Paul sought, were not confined to a family or nation ; but were people of every family, nation and country, Jews and Gentiles, Greeks and Romans, Barbarians, Scythians, Bond and Free, wherever, and to whomsoever, he could obtain access to preach the gospel. And the profit, the good, which he sought for them, was not such as men of a carnal, worldly temper are wont to desire and seek ; but those spiritual blessings—that holy salvation—that eternal life, which consists in and results from the true knowledge of the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

Paul's benevolent affection, then, was of such a nature, as led him to desire and seek and rejoice in the greatest attainable good of intelligent being, comprising the glory of God, and the happiness of creatures, and particularly of mankind, in the greatest extent and degree that can be consistently accomplished.

In these respects, Paul's benevolent spirit differed very widely from the regard which some parents have for their children, and which some men have for their country and nation. Paul's differed from theirs with respect to the extent of its object. The object of their benevolent regard is, often, very limited, and comprises but a small proportion of the human race.

Parents often have a great regard for their children and such as are particularly friendly to them, whilst they have no disinterested good will to the rest of mankind. And some men have a high regard for the welfare of their own nation, not only in distinction from, but even in opposition to, that of other nations. But Paul's benevolent affection extended to and embraced the whole human race, yea, the whole intellectual system ; and sought the best good and greatest happiness of the whole ; and of the several parts and individuals, as far as might be obtained or effected consistently with the greatest good of the whole.

Paul's benevolent spirit differed also, very widely from that of many parents and zealous parents, with respect to the *nature and source* of the happiness, which he principally desired

and sought for the objects of his friendly regard, and in which he principally rejoiced.

Holiness is not essential to and makes no part of the good or happiness, which many affectionate parents desire and seek for their children, and many patriots for their country or nation. The good things of this world, its riches and treasures, honors and pleasures, constitute the good principally sought by many for their children, or their nation. But Paul, as hath been shown, principally desired for the many, whose profit he sought, those spiritual blessings which are of a holy nature and endless duration—the eternal life, which consists in and results from the knowledge of the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; and which, of course, has an indissoluble connection with the glory of God and the best good and greatest happiness of the moral system. That such, as has been represented, was the apostle's disposition, appears not only from his own declarations; but also, from the whole tenor of his conduct, from the time of his conversion to the end of his life.

PRESBYTES.

[To be continued.]

Thoughts respecting the inconceivable worth of the soul of man, and the immense evil involved in the loss of it; suggested by Christ's words in Matthew xvi. 26.

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

PART I.

WHEN a child is born into the world, possessed of a rational soul, endued with the essential principles or faculties of a moral agent, an existence is commenced, which is not to terminate with the life of the body; nor to cease with the dissolution of the visible heavens and earth. It will survive the ruins of this world. It will continue, after the heavens shall have passed away with a great noise, and the elements shall have melted with fervent heat, and the earth and the works which are therein shall have been burnt up. The past part of its duration will, even then, be as nothing in comparison with what will still be future. For it will never come to an end. It will continue as long as the everliving God endures.

The capacity of this living, spiritual principle, called the soul, for understanding and knowledge, love or hatred, joy or sorrow, happiness or misery, is inconceivably great.

In the early stages of its existence it appears, indeed, to be extremely small. But the child, as it grows in stature, generally discovers a growing capacity for knowledge, rational exercise, and mental pleasure or pain.

This visible growth or enlargement of the human soul, may ordinarily be expected to be greater or less, more rapid or slow, in some proportion to the opportunities, means, and advantages for instruction and

knowledge, and to the attention paid to it.

The soul's capacity appears to expand and enlarge with the increase of knowledge, and for ought we know, may continue to do so for ever. The more a man knows, the more, generally speaking, doth he desire to know; the greater and more ardent is his thirst for an increase of knowledge, and the more enlarged his view or conviction of the vast variety, extent, and magnitude of the objects of human knowledge.

Though we may not be able to attain to a perfect knowledge and full comprehension of any thing; yet we are capable of being taught and understanding much, about an innumerable variety of objects, visible and invisible, material and spiritual, past, present, and future, temporal and eternal.

The activity and powers of our souls are great and wonderful. In an instant, we can look back, through all periods of time, to the day of creation; and think of the incomprehensible, eternal existence of God. With equal ease, we can cast our thoughts forward to the end of the world, to the end of time, and contemplate or think of the scenes of a succeeding eternity. In a very short space, we can, in our minds or thoughts, rove round the world, or penetrate to its centre, or mount above the sky, and traverse the regions of the stars, or ascend to heaven, where God is enthroned in glory, surrounded and adored by myriads of spotless spirits; or descend to hell, where the wicked groan and wail in torment and despair.

But the most important knowledge, of which we are capable, is the knowledge of God—of his character and will, and of our duty and the way to enjoy him for ever; and, if rightly disposed, of beholding his ineffable glory and beauty.

I proceed to observe, that our souls are capable, not only, of a great degree of knowledge; but also, of moral disposition, affections and exercises, strong and vigorous, producing, or accompanied and followed with much good or evil to ourselves and others, and with an incalculable degree of pleasure or pain, joy or sorrow, happiness or misery, never ceasing, never ending, but, probably, always increasing.

By the powers and faculties of our souls we are proper subjects of moral obligation—of moral government; and accountable to him, who made and upholds us, and reveals the rule and measure of our duty. We are capable subjects of the knowledge, love, service and enjoyment of God. We are also capable of kind, benevolent affections and, of beneficent and useful actions, towards our neighbours and fellow-creatures.—And we are under great and infinite obligation, to love God with all our heart, and to serve and obey him with all our might, and to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to do as we would be done by—to do good as we have opportunity—to be just, kind and beneficent, in our feelings and conduct, towards all; and in a word, to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.

By the faculties of our souls,

in connection with those of our bodies, to which they are united, and of which they have the direction, control and government, we are capable of acting upon choice and design, and as dependent agents or voluntary instruments in the hand of God, of conceiving and executing, or contributing to the accomplishment of great designs, for our own and others' benefit, and for the honor and glory of God.

We are, moreover, capable of knowing and inwardly feeling our obligations to the duties incumbent on us, towards God, ourselves, and our fellow-creatures, and to abstain from every thing of a contrary nature and tendency.

The right and just, the kind, benevolent, friendly and beneficent affections and actions, which we ought to exercise and perform, are naturally productive of, or accompanied and followed with, inward pleasure and peace, joy and happiness.

Benevolent, kind, tender and friendly dispositions, affections, and exercises, are calm and peaceful—in their very nature, pleasurable and happifying. He who, in the exercise of a benevolent, friendly spirit, loves and does good to his neighbours, and contributes to their support, comfort and happiness, experiences much pleasure and satisfaction, and feels happy, in so doing. And did we, in fact, love God and our fellow creatures, as we ought to, and constantly act out and exhibit this love, in worshipping and serving God and doing his will with all our might, and in all the genuine expressions of justice and righteousness, beneficence and mercy, towards our fellow creatures, all discordant, jarring, and grating affections, lusts and passions would be utterly excluded; and all the inward peace, pleasure and joy, involved in, and naturally springing from such a temper and conduct, would be constantly experienced, together with the comfortable feelings of an approving conscience, and a consciousness of the approbation and favor of God, and of all wise and holy beings.

We should, likewise in this way, participate and share in, and enjoy, so far as we are capable subjects of such enjoyment, all the happiness and glory of God, and of the happy subjects of his eternal kingdom. For by love to others we appropriate to ourselves all their happiness, in proportion to our knowledge and sense of it, and to the strength and intenseness of our love to them.

The parent who loves his children as himself, thereby makes their happiness his own, and experiences as real and as great satisfaction and joy in their prosperity and happiness, as in his own personal prosperity. So likewise, if we in fact loved our neighbors as ourselves, we should have as real pleasure and delight in their welfare as in our own, and thus appropriate their happiness to ourselves, and make it our own. And if we really loved God with all our heart, and soul, and mind, his glory and happiness would be above all things grateful and dear to our hearts; and in proportion to the extent and degree of our knowledge, view, and sense thereof, we should be pleased and delighted, and rejoice therein, with

as real and great satisfaction and joy, as if it were our own personal glory and happiness. Thus, were we, and had we always been, perfect in love, we should constantly share in and enjoy all the happiness of the moral system, comprising God and his creatures, so far as it comes within our view, and we are capable subjects of enjoying it. And our own joy and happiness thence resulting, would increase, as our knowledge and views, apprehensions and sense of the happiness and glory of God and his kingdom were extended and enlarged.

Thus, if sin had never entered, *all human souls* would have been constantly enjoying a happiness, pure and sublime, without alloy, and commensurate with their knowledge and capacity for enjoyment, and continually increasing, as these increased.

And to all this, will all those of mankind be finally brought, who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, to the saving of the soul. They who are saved by Christ, though but imperfectly sanctified in this life, will finally be redeemed from all iniquity, and rendered to the extent of their capacity, holy as he is holy, and pure as he is pure.

When Christ shall appear, they will be like him, and appear with him in glory. He will then present to himself all the redeemed and sanctified, "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but holy and without blemish." God will be their God, and their portion for ever. They will, therefore, have all his adorable perfections united, as the foundation and basis, the source and fountain of their support and happiness for ever. Of course, their complete everlasting happiness will be as effectually provided for and secured, as stable and certain, as the all-sufficient God can render it. He knows he is able to and will form and fit them, in soul and body, for the most pure, sublime, and completely satisfying knowledge, exercises and affections, employments and enjoyments, and utterly abolish every appetite, inclination or desire, which is not consistent with such a state of soul and body.

He is, likewise, able and will satisfy and *fill* every desire of their whole persons, thus fitted for complete, everlasting happiness.

At the day of judgment and thenceforward, they will, in the fullest sense, inherit the kingdom prepared for them. Perfectly purified from all selfish, carnal, and worldly appetites and desires, affections and lusts, and formed with tempers and tastes, perfectly suited to the objects, company, discoveries, exercises, employments, and enjoyments of the heavenly world and state, they will be ever there with the Lord, as children and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, participating with him in his ineffable glory and happiness, in the inheritance of all things.

How great, then, how ineffable, how far surpassing all our present conceptions, must be the joy and happiness of every soul which is saved!

Every such soul will be entirely freed from every irregular, discordant, corroding, and disquieting passion, desire, and in-

clination. Every such soul will be of a perfectly benevolent and friendly disposition, perfectly conformed to God, and glow with supreme and perfect love to him; and with the most pure and disinterested benevolence towards and complacency in every fellow-subject of the kingdom of God.

Every such soul, united to its risen and glorious body, will find itself a fixed—an eternal inhabitant of heaven, in company with Christ and all the saved and all the holy angels. There the most grand and glorious objects, perfectly suited to its holy taste, will be constantly presented to its view. There it will behold the clear exhibition of the ineffably glorious character and perfections of God, made in the whole series of his works and dispensations; and, probably, in ways, and by means, and to a degree, at present, inconceivable by us. The saved will see, with ineffable joy and delight, the full accomplishment of the divine declaration and promise, that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head—the works of the devil destroyed--everyenemy of God and his kingdom vanquished and subdued—the Saviour gloriously triumphant—the whole redeemed church in actual glory and perfect happiness—all the great designs of God, in regard to the glory of his own great name, and to the best good and greatest happiness of the system, accomplished, exactly to his mind, according to his original intention, and his throne and kingdom established in eternal peace.

There they will continually experience the conscious and sensible enjoyment of God's favor and love, and rejoice in him as their God, and Father, and portion for ever.—There each individual will join and bear a part, with the myriads composing that glorious society, in the worship and honors paid, and in the songs of praise and triumph addressed, to the thrice Holy One. And each individual, by the most pure and perfect love to God and to every subject of his holy and happy kingdom, will partake and share, to the extent of his capacity, in the glory and happiness of the whole. So far as he is capable of contemplating and having an idea and sense of the glory and happiness of God, and of the myriads of his holy and happy subjects, he will experience the same unutterable satisfaction, joy and delight in the whole, as if it were all his own. For by the perfect union of hearts, between the head and all the members of the heavenly society, produced by perfect love, they have one common interest, of which every individual partakes, and which he enjoys, to the full extent of his capacity.

How full and complete, then, and how inconceivably great in degree, will be the joy and happiness of every soul which is saved? And to what an infinite sum of real, substantial good will it amount by being continued for ever, and probably, with a progressive increase, by a gradual increase of knowledge, and a proportionable expansion and enlargement of the capacity for enjoyment?—In comparison with this, how inconsiderable, how small and trifling a good to a man,—yea, how worthless and

despicable, would be the acquisition and sole possession of the whole world, during the period of his existence on the earth?

This infinite good doth every one lose; of all this doth every one fall short, who loses his own soul.

PRESBYTES.

[To be continued.]

Remarks on Mark ix. 49.

An attempt to explain what is intended by salting with fire, and salting with salt.

Christ, in a discourse addressed to his disciples, said, "For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." Mark ix. 49.

TO ascertain the meaning of these words, it may be proper to observe, that it was expressly injoined upon the children of Israel to *season* every obligation of their meat-offering with *salt*, and with all their offerings to offer salt; which is termed the salt of the covenant of their God. Lev. ii. 13.

One end for which salt is commonly used, is to season meats and other kinds of food, in order to give them a good relish, and render them more agreeable to the taste. Another is to cleanse meat from those parts, which would otherwise cause it to corrupt, and thus to preserve it from putrefaction, and to keep it good and savory.—Hence, salt is made use of as an emblem of incorruption and perpetuity. A perpetual covenant is, therefore, termed "a covenant of salt for ever;" as in Numb. xviii. 19. and 2 Chron. xiii. 5.

The offerings presented by the children of Israel, were ordered to be seasoned with salt, probably, "as an emblem of their purification from corruption, and of their savor and acceptableness to God." In allusion to this, Christ said, "Every sacrifice shall be salted with salt;" intimating, as I conceive, that every one who sincerely devotes himself to God, as a living sacrifice, shall be seasoned with grace, or knowledge and holiness, whereby his heart and life will be purified from moral corruption, and he, of course, preserved from everlasting destruction.

As salt cleanses and preserves meat from putrefaction and renders it savory and wholesome; so the Christian, who gives himself up to God and his service through Jesus Christ, has his heart and life purified by divine grace, and is rendered savory in his principles, dispositions and affections, conversation and practice, and preserved from the everlasting destruction, in which corrupt principles and affections, words and actions, indulged and persevered in, would finally involve him.

In this sense every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Every person, who presents himself to God, as a living sacrifice, shall, through the knowledge of gospel truth, and the influence of divine grace by the operation of the holy spirit, have his heart purged from corrupt dispositions and principles, and his life from corrupt morals and become savory in his affections, conver-

sation and practice, and prepared to glorify and enjoy God for ever.

But in contradistinction from those who are thus salted with salt, denoting their purification, preservation, and salvation, *every one* who refuses the mortification and self-denial required in the gospel, and indulges his sinful appetites and lusts, shall be salted with fire. As the burnt-sacrifices under the law, when prepared and salted, were consumed upon the altar by the fire, which was kept continually burning; so he, being by his iniquities fitted for destruction, shall fall into the unquenchable fire of divine wrath, which shall preserve him in existence for ever whilst it destroys all his happiness, and fills him with extreme and unceasing torment.

In the immediately preceding part of his discourse, Christ had said, "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better, &c. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched;"—plainly signifying, that whatever proves an obstacle to the faithful discharge of every duty, or an occasion of sin, though it be as dear to our hearts, or seemingly as necessary to our comfort and happiness, as a hand, a foot, or an eye, ought to be parted with and renounced—that it is really better for us to go to heaven without it, than to retain it and go to hell—that it is better for us, to undergo the most painful sufferings in the way of duty here, and to practise the greatest mortification and self-denial, of which we are capable in this world, and enter into life, than to live in ease and sinful pleasures here, and go to hell at last, into that place of endless torment, where the miserable sufferers will be constantly filled with the keenest pain and torture, as though a never-dying worm was continually preying upon their vitals, and they continually burning in unquenchable fire. Then follow the words, "For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." The particle *for*, with which these words are introduced, shows, that they are connected with, and contain some illustration, reason, or confirmation of the things expressed in the foregoing passage. Viewed in this light, I think, the words must be understood as affirming, that every one, who doth not practise the mortification and self-denial before injoined, but indulges his irregular appetites and lusts, neglects the duties required of him, and departs from the truth, rather than deny himself and bear the cross after Christ, shall fall a sacrifice to divine justice, and be cast into that eternal fire, of which the continual fire upon the altar which consumed the burnt-offerings, was an emblem; whilst, on the other hand, every one who practises the self-denial and mortification injoined, hear-

tily devoting himself to God and his service, at the expense of every thing inconsistent therewith, shall, like the meat-offering which was seasoned with salt, be savory and acceptable to God through the virtue of Christ's atonement, and the grace bestowed in consideration thereof, and preserved from destruction for ever. God's wrath against the wicked is often compared to and represented by fire. Jer. iv. 4. "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your hearts, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings."—And Ezek. xxi. 31. "I will pour out my indignation upon thee; I will blow against thee in the fire of my wrath." Of this fire of divine wrath against the wicked, the fire upon the altar, which consumed the sacrifices for sin, appears to have been an emblem.

Some animal was substituted in the place of the sinner, to die in his stead. The transgressor laid his hand upon the head of the animal which was to be sacrificed, as a token of confessing his guilt and desert of death, and of his presenting that animal, according to God's gracious appointment, to die in his stead, that he might be forgiven. Hence, when the animal thus substituted in the place of the sinner, was consumed by the fire upon the altar, which was kept continually burning, how natural is it to consider that fire, as a designed emblem and representation of the divine wrath against sin, with which every finally impenitent sinner is to be incessantly tormented for ever.

In what an awful light, doth the passage, to which we have been attending, represent the final state of the wicked? Therefore, see hence, the unparalleled folly of refusing a strict adherence and conformity to the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, on account of the mortification and self-denial, or losses implied therein, or which may be occasioned thereby; or of indulging ungodliness and worldly lusts, on account of ease, pleasure, or any worldy advantages.

PRESBYTES.

FROM THE PHILADELPHIA INTELLIGENCER.

Parlour Preaching.

INSTRUCTION may often be communicated with greater advantage in private than in public discourses. In the former, the speaker can address his hearers with a direct relation to the particular circumstances in which they are placed; whereas in public preaching, his observations must of necessity be for the most part general; besides, in the small circle of a private family, there is a liberty and familiarity allowable, which cannot be admitted into the pulpit. The preacher can pause, and inquire whether he is understood; and in many cases the questions and observations of those whom he is endeavoring to instruct, will suggest to him the most important and appropriate ideas and sentiments.

The Lord Jesus Christ has left to all his servants an instructive example in this part of their duty. Several of his most beautiful and edifying discourses were delivered in private houses, and occasioned by the peculiar circumstances of those with whom he conversed.

The Apostle Paul, appears also to have spent a part of his time in communicating instruction in this mode; for in that most excellent and pathetic discourse which he delivered to the elders of Ephesus, he speaks of it as his practice amongst them, not only *to teach publicly, but from house to house.*

In modern times, it is to be lamented, that less is done in this way than could be wished. After making every allowance which candor requires on this subject:—admitting that young preachers, for several years after they appear in the pulpit, ought to spend a considerable portion of time in their studies, that they may prepare themselves for more extensive usefulness in after life; that some ministers of the gospel may be so circumstanced, that much of their time must be employed by an attention to the general interests of the church; that some must consume a large part in making that provision for their families which their people are either unwilling or unable to make for them; and that a few may actually be qualified (as I have heard the late president Edwards judged that he was) to do more good by writing for the public in their studies, than by spending much time in conversation:—after making as much allowance for these, and all other considerations of a similar kind, as truth and justice require, it is feared that much room will still remain for well founded complaint on this subject.

Some preachers do not possess the talent of readily introducing religious conversation, and therefore when they first make the attempt, it is with such a stiff and awkward air that every person present is made uneasy, and none more so than the speaker himself.—Hence, perhaps, he too hastily forms the conclusion, that he is not, and never shall be, qualified for this species of instruction; and therefore, after a few unsuccessful attempts, relinquishes the object as hopeless. Others are so occupied in the investigation of dark and unprofitable speculations in theology, or in correcting and polishing their sermons, so that they may be brought to the highest pitch of elegance, that they have no time to spare for this tedious mode of preaching: And others again, are so fastidious, that they cannot condescend to hold free and familiar conversation with ignorant people. They are immediately disgusted with the crude conceptions and blundering expressions of many with whom they converse, and their feelings, wound up to an excessive degree of refinement, cannot bear the shock of a collision with vulgar minds.*

* Do persons of this character, ever think of the condescension of the Saviour? Possessing intelligence and purity as far exceeding that of any human being, as the sun exceeds a ray of his own light, how kindly, patiently and familiarly, did he con-

We might yet mention another class of persons who, although invested with the office of preachers of the gospel, consider it in no other light than any other trade. They pursue it for the sake of a decent livelihood, and they will do no more than they are obliged to perform. But if indeed they were to attempt instruction by religious conversation, they would be found utterly incapable of the task. If such a preacher should meet with a person suffering the smart of a wounded conscience, never having had any experience of such a case, he could neither sympathize with nor comfort the poor awakened sinner. Or if he should happen upon a child of God laboring under perplexing doubts respecting his spiritual state, he would be entirely at a loss how to proceed with such a person. Having had no experience of the hidden life of a believer, no knowledge of his trials and conflicts, he would judge all these things to be the fruits of a distempered mind.

There is one thing, which if duly considered, I think would have no small influence upon those whose office it is to teach, and which would go far to remove all impediments out of the way, which now hinder them from using every opportunity of leading men into the way of salvation: what I allude to is this, That the ministers of the gospel are accountable for the loss of every soul which perishes thro' their criminal negligence, whether that negligence proceed directly from sloth, from the pretence of study, from the affectation of refinement, or from indifference and carelessness. Every minister of the gospel ought to be able to say with sincerity, as Paul did in the above mentioned discourse, "*Wherefore I take you to record this day that I am free from the blood of all men.*"

But the obstacles, to what I call parlour preaching, do not arise wholly from the negligence or incompetence of the ministers of the gospel, but at least one half of the blame lies at the door of the people.

A preacher pays a visit to a wealthy, fashionable family As a gentlemen of character and education, he is treated with politeness and attention. He may eat and drink of the best; but if he should happen to think with himself, "My constant employment should be to promote the salvation of men. These, with whom I now am, are a part of my flock, for whom I must render an account; and they need advice and admonition as much as any"—And, in consequence, if he should introduce a discourse upon the important subject of salvation, what would probably be the effect? The company would be struck dumb with astonishment at his rudeness; and the snarl of disgust, the smile of contempt, or the look of disapprobation, might be expected, as the reward of his temerity.

If some polished buck, however, should think it no insult

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verse with the poor, the rude the ignorant and the froward! Shall any one of his ministers feel an intolerable disgust at what their Lord and Master performed with pleasure! Shall dust and ashes refuse to mingle with their kindred, when God's eternal Son hath shown them such an example!

to the clerical character, to take his Maker's name in vain, this peradventure might give no offence to the same company: But if the clergyman should, in the most modest way possible, insinuate that this practice was offensive to God and painful to himself, it would probably be considered such an outrage on good breeding as to merit the high displeasure, not only of the culprit, but of every other person in the company. In such circumstances, it is easy to see, that there is little hope of doing good by *preaching*. If the preacher attempt it once, he will not be likely to have a second opportunity of instructing the same persons. So far from attempting parlour preaching in such circumstances as these, it will be the wisdom of gospel ministers to keep at a distance from companies, however honorable in the estimation of the world, where their sacred profession is disregarded. To be esteemed for their wit or vivacity in conversation, or for their elegant and polished manners, by those who despise their calling, is to them no honor, but a disgrace. In what is usually called *fashionable life*, there is, alas, little room for religion. In forming the regulations by which people of this condition are governed, the religion of Christ too seldom has any place in the system; and while persons are whirled in the vortex of fashion, there is very little hope of their salvation.

But obstacles to religious instruction exist not only among rich and fashionable people, but also among those of every condition.

In many houses the whole attention is given to the body; and when such are visited by the minister, all hands are set to work to provide for his gratification. Instead of one, there are often half a dozen Marthas, *who are cumbered with much serving*, and not one listening Mary in the whole circle.

In other places, he will have religious conversation enough, but to very little profit. Obscure and knotty questions, commonly incapable of a certain solution, and of no consequence if one could be given, are treasured up, in order that they may be proposed to the minister. He must give his opinion, as to the mark set upon Cain, the thorn in Paul's flesh, and must tell who Melchisedeck was, and whom the witch of Endor raised up for Saul. But no one inquires, "What must I do to be saved? Or how may I grow in grace most successfully? What are the best evidences of a chage of nature, or what ought a christian to do in such and such given circumstances?" Others have an itch for controversy, and they feel the importance of being able to maintain or dispute with the minister, and perhaps of vanquishing him in their own conceit. There are many persons who glory in holding some opinions different from those commonly received. These they often bring forward to be discussed, not that they expect instruction or wish to obtain new light; for nothing can exceed the confidence and pertinacity with which these favorite opinions are held. The holder would sooner renounce the whole creed, than yield one of

these notions, which he cherishes with a fatherly fondness, considering them as the fruit of his own invention, the result of his own ingenuity; and therefore he would as soon suffer you to offer him the grossest personal insult, as to rob him of any of these opinions

Again, the spirit of party among many people is so prevalent, that they will hear nothing willingly, receive nothing cordially, unless it comes through one particular channel. A single phrase, which they consider as belonging to a different system, even if it be a scriptural phrase, will shut the mind against all instruction from the person who was so unfortunate as to use it. Some serious people are as much offended at hearing the words, "election" and "predestination," as if they were never used in scripture, but invented by the enemies of God and religion.

But the chief obstacle with all classes is a want of *taste* for religious conversation. On any other subject they will be fluent, but here they are mute. If you begin conversation. you must carry it on yourself. Those who habitually neglect their salvation, take no pleasure in hearing of its importance. Especially, most people dislike to be interrogated by their minister, as to the condition of their souls, though it be done in a private, personal conversation. They are conscious that all is not well, and they cannot bear to confess the truth. Many therefore keep up an opinion that the exercises of the heart ought not to be spoken of, that it savors of ostentation and is a mark of hypocrisy; but surely there can be no ostentation in a man's confessing to his pastor that he is an unconverted, inexcusable sinner; or in relating the imperfection of his duties and the weakness of his graces.

Young people are generally much afraid to be interrogated about the concerns of their souls, and they dread the company of clergymen on this very account, fearing that they may be asked whether they are engaged in the great work of their salvation.

But ministers should never cease from their endeavours. One word, seasonably and affectionately spoken, has often been the means of saving a soul from death. Private admonition and advice have been remarkably blessed in former times, and they are so still where they are diligently, tenderly, and prudently used.

I wish therefore that the old practice of parlour preaching should be revived: and in order to encourage it I purpose to furnish, from time to time, some specimens of this mode of preaching by a friend of mine, who makes up his deficiency as a public speaker, by unremitting efforts to be useful to his people in private; and the good effects of his labors in this way have induced me to recommend the same practice to others in the same office. As the modesty of my friend would be greatly violated by introducing his real name into this paper, I shall speak of him under the fictitious name of Eusebius; and the reader may expect one of his parlour discourses, in the next number of the magazine.

To the Honorable General Assembly of the State of Connecticut now convened at Hartford in said State.

THE Trustees of the Missionary Society of Connecticut, pursuant to the requirements of law, REPORT, That the state of the Society's funds, at the close of the year 1807 is exhibited by a statement accompanying this Report.—NO. 1 of that statement shews the amount of contributions of the Ecclesiastical societies therein named, being $ 2780, 82 1-2. NO. 2 shews the amount of revenue within the year derived from other sources, being $ 3056, 20 1-2. No. 3 shews the amount of disbursements by order of the Trustees, for the same period, being $ 1877, 84 and NO. 4 being an account current with the Treasurer, as stated on the annual audit of accounts, shews the balance in favor of the Society, being $ 29153, 78.

The funds of the Society, though far from being adequate to the diffusion of Christian knowledge in the United States connected with the funds of other missionary institutions in the other States, yet are at present adequate to the number of missionaries which the Trustees can obtain, and to the other means of religious instruction which are proper for them to employ. The expenditures for the year past indeed exceed those of the year preceding, and probably will continue to increase, in future, as the obstacles which for some years past, have diminished missionary labor, are overcome. It is no part of the object of the Trustees to accumulate that part of their funds which the donors have devoted to immediate service, but on the contrary, they will not fail to expend the same as fast as they can employ fit instruments and means of carrying on, successfully, the great and benevolent work committed to their care. This fund being at present adequate to their prospects of immediate service, they have thought fit to intermit their usual application to your Honors for licence to solicit further contributions from the Ecclesiastical societies in this State. As the great sources of revenue are, therefore, either exhausted, or intermitted, the fund destined for immediate consumption will, no doubt, suffer a gradual diminution, until it is expended; and whenever the service of the missionary cause shall demand further aid, from that circumstance or from an extension of their sphere of usefulness; the Trustees will not be wanting in their duty to ask your Honors further patronage to obtain it, having perfect confidence that the Honorable Assembly, who have so uniformly manifested their approbation of the object and conduct of the Society, will continue to foster the one, and approve the other, as occasion shall justify.

By order, and in behalf, of the board of Trustees.

ABEL FLINT, *Secretary.*

Hartford, May 25th, A.D. 1808.

N. B. The statement of the Society's Funds referred to in the preceding Report, was published in the Magazine for February.

POETRY.

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On the late Effusion of the Spirit in various parts of the United States.

HAIL! happy period, favor'd land,
Enlighten'd with the heavenly ray!
The sun of righteousness descends,
And turns our darkness into day.

Long thro' our coasts has sin prevail'd
And fill'd the humble heart with fears;
Yet JESUS, in our heaviest hours,
With his rich gifts and grace appears.

Hail! children of Emmanuel's love!
New trophies of victorious grace!
And thou, most holy spirit, hail!
Thine all the work be thine the praise!

No more our faith with fainting breath,
Pours o'er the word the languid pray'r:
No more our hope expiring, reads
The gracious promise bright'ning there.

Floods on the parched ground descend,
To life dry bones in numbers spring,
Low at the cross the scorner bends;
And owns the crucified king.

Beneath the spirit's gentle dews,
The fields a vivid aspect wear;
And in his life inspiring breath,
Shepherds and folds together share.

Zion with shame reviews her fears,
Her deep despondence and distrust,*
Lifts her returning smiles to God,
And owns him to his promise just.

The scorner sees and doubts and fears,
Admires and owns the influence strange,
The infidel almost believes,
And marks in thoughtless crowds—the change

Christians! content not thus—rejoice
In God your Saviour and his care,
This work the witness of his love,
Your proof of his accepting pray'r.

* But Zion said the Lord hath forsaken me and my Lord hath forgotten me.

With angels bending from the skies
To join the contrite's raptur'd lays,
Mingle your strains of sweetest note,
And take your fill of joy in praise.

Thro' the wide world his love make known,
His mercy, truth and matchless grace,
Till the whole world together join'd,
His mercy, truth and pow'r confess.

Donations to the Missionary Society of Connecticut.

1808. May.		
	Litchfield Female Association, - -	$ 31 61
	Hampton Cent Society, - - -	11 41
12	Cinda Baldwin of Branford, deceased (a Legacy),	30
13	Female Society in Woodbury, - - -	7 37
	A Young Lady in Woodbridge, - - -	25
16	A Friend of Missions, - - -	1
17	Windham Female Charitable Society, - - -	7 12
18	A Friend of Missions in Killingly, - -	45
	Rev Israel Brainerd, Contributed in New Settlements, - - - -	2
	12 Testaments by N. Lambert, Esq.	
		$ 91 21